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APPEAL POCKET SERIES NO. 181

Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

Epigrams of Thoreau

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**APPEAL PUBLISHING COMPANY
GIRARD, KANSAS**

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Introduction

*Henry David Thoreau, who may be termed the founder of the cult of the Simple Life, was born in Concord, Massachusetts, on the 12th of July, 1817. His forebears belonged to St. Helier, Jersey, and his grandfather settled in New England somewhere about 1773. He has been described as "scholar-gypsy, poet, naturalist, moralist . . . and above all, transcendentalist." An illuminating account of transcendentalism—which gives the clue to Thoreau's attitude towards life—is given by Will H. Dircks in his prefatory note to Thoreau's *Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers* (Walter Scott, Camelot Edition), the diary of a voyage he took with his brother John in 1839. This book, and *Walden*, are the two works by which he is best known in this country. He has, however, many other volumes to his name, including *Letters*, *Essays*, and a monograph on Sir Walter Raleigh. Thoreau was a man of marked individuality. He was well educated, and graduated at Harvard in 1837. His occupations were various. For a short time he kept a school with his brother at Concord, where later he became a lecturer. He then took part for a time in his father's business of lead-pencil-making, to which he succeeded on his father's death. At another time we find him in the role of Land Surveyor. But his passionate love of Nature,*

and intense desire for solitude wherein "to front only the essential facts of life," took him to the woods in 1845. In the spring of that year he built with his own hands a little house by Walden Pond (the story of which is detailed in *Walden*); and there for over two years he led the life of a recluse, with abundant leisure for the pursuit of literature and nature study, returning home to Concord in September, 1847. Emerson was among the friends of his early manhood, and he was an intimate of that brilliant intellectual circle which Emerson gathered around him, and which included Margaret Fuller and Nathaniel Hawthorne. The grave of Thoreau is close to that of Hawthorne in the Sleepy Hollow of his beloved Concord. He never married, and he died of a bronchial affection on the 6th of May, 1862, at the comparatively early age of forty-five.

PIGRAMS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU.

What is the use of going right over the old track again? . . . You must make tracks into the unknown.



Our thoughts are the epochs in our lives; all else is but as a journal of the winds that blew while we were here.



As the wild duck is more swift and beautiful than the tame, so is the wild—the mallard—thought, which 'mid falling dews wings its way among the fens.



Superfluous wealth can buy superfluities only. Money is not required to buy one necessary of the soul.



To enjoy a thing exclusively is commonly to exclude yourself from the true enjoyment of it.



The violence of love is as much to be dreaded as that of hate. When it is durable it is serene and equable.

Nothing was ever so unfamiliar and startling to a man as his own thoughts.



Silence is the ambrosial night in the intercourse of friends, in which their sincerity ~~is recruited and~~ takes deeper root.



The life of a wise man is most of all extemporaneous, for he lives out of an eternity which includes all time.



If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.



However mean your life is, meet it and live it; do not shun it and call it hard names. It is not so bad as you are.



Some would find fault with the morning-red, if they ever got up early enough . . . The fault-finder will find faults even in Paradise.



The universe is wider than our views of it.



There is always room and occasion enough

for a true book an any subject; as there is room for more light the brightest day, and more rays will not interfere with the first.



We do not wish for friends to feed and clothe our bodies—neighbors are kind enough for that—but to do the like office for our spirits.



Society is commonly too cheap. We meet at very short intervals, not having had time to acquire any new value for each other.



Knowledge does not come to us by details, but in flashes of light from heaven.



The true poem is not that which the public reads. There is always a poem not printed on paper, coincident with the production of this, stereotyped in the poet's life. It is *what he has become through his work*.



No face which we can give to a matter will stead us so well at last as the truth.



A man of fine perceptions is more truly feminine than a merely sentimental woman.

Do not trouble yourself much to get new things, whether clothes or friends. Turn the old; return to them. Things do not change; we change. Sell your clothes and keep your thoughts. God will see that you do not want society.



The man is the richest whose pleasures are the cheapest.



We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers. A man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will.

Solitude is not measured by the miles of space between a man and his fellows.



Keep up the fires of thought, and all will go well. . . . You fail in your thoughts or you prevail in your thoughts alone.



The only excuse for reproduction is improvement. Nature abhors repetition.



Life is so short that it is not wise to take roundabout ways, nor can we spend much time in waiting.

The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us: and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. . . . Poetry and art, and the fairest of the actions of men, date from such an hour.



In love and friendship the imagination is as much exercised as the heart; and if either is outraged, the other will be estranged.



If to chaffer and higgler are bad in trade, they are much worse in love. It demands directness as of an arrow.



The highest that we can attain to is not knowledge, but sympathy with intelligence.



It is the art of mankind to polish the world, and everyone who works is scrubbing in some part.



Men are in the main alike, but they were made several in order that they might be various.



Life consists with wildness. The most alive is the wildest.

When I would recreate myself, I seek the darkest wood, the thickest and most interminable, and to the citizen, most dismal swamp. I enter a swamp as a sacred place—a *sanctum sanctorum*. There is the strength, the marrow of Nature.



I believe in the forest, in the meadow, and in the night in which the corn grows.



Man is continually saying to woman, Why will you not be more wise? Woman is continually saying to man, Why will you not be more loving? It is not in their wills to be wise or to be loving; but unless each is both wise and loving, there can be neither wisdom nor love.



A truly good book is something as natural, and as unexpectedly and unaccountably fair and perfect, as a wild flower discovered on the prairies of the West or in the jungles of the East.



We are superior to the joy we experience.



Aim above morality. Be not simply good; be good for something.

There is not necessarily any gross and ugly fact which may not be eradicated from the life of man.



In what concerns you much, do not think you have companions; know that you are alone in the world.



It is not when I am going to meet him, but when I am just turning away and leaving him, that I discover that God is.



That we have but little faith is not sad, but that we have but little faithfulness. By faithfulness faith is earned.



Genius is a light which makes the darkness visible, like the lightning's flash, which perchance shatters the temple of knowledge itself—and not a taper lighted at the hearthstone of the race, which pales before the light of common day.



Be not anxious to avoid poverty. In this way the wealth of the universe may be safely invested.



Respect men as brothers only.

Is not the attitude of expectation somewhat divine?—a sort of home-made divineness?



Probe the earth to see where your main roots lie.



When you travel to the Celestial City, carry no letters of introduction. When you knock, ask to see God—none of the servants.



The laws of earth are for the feet, or inferior man; the laws of heaven are for the head, or superior man.



To have done anything by which you earned money *merely* is to have been truly idle or worse. If the laborer gets no more than the wages which his employer pays him, he is cheated; he cheats himself.



One may be drunk with love without being any nearer to finding one's mate.



We must repeatedly withdraw into our shells of thought, like the tortoise, somewhat helplessly; yet there is more than philosophy in that.

Do what you love. Know your own bone;
gnaw at it, bury it, unearth it, and gnaw it still.



An efficient and valuable man does what he
can, whether the community pay him for it
or not.



If words were invented to conceal thought,
I think that newspapers are a great improve-
ment on a bad invention.



The man who takes the liberty to live is su-
perior to all laws, by virtue of his relation
to the law-maker.



We hug the earth—how rarely we mount!
Methinks we might elevate ourselves a little
more. We might climb a tree, at least.



There is more religion in men's science than
there is science in their religion.



In a pleasant spring morning all men's sins
are forgiven. Such a day is a truce to vice.
While such a sun holds out to burn, the vilest
sinner may return.

A man's ignorance sometimes is not only useful, but beautiful, while his knowledge, so called, is oftentimes worse than useless, besides being ugly.



Which is the best man to deal with—he who knows nothing about a subject, and, what is extremely rare, knows that he knows nothing, or he who really knows something about it, but thinks that he knows all?



It is too late to be studying Hebrew; it is more important to understand the slang of today.



The heart is blind; but love is not blind. None of the gods is so discriminating.



It requires a direct dispensation from Heaven to be a walker. You must be born into the family of Walkers. *Ambulator nascitur, non fit.*



He who gives himself entirely to his fellow-men appears to them useless and selfish; but he who gives himself partially to them is pronounced a benefactor and philanthropist.

As the truest society approaches always nearer to solitude, so the most excellent speech finally falls into silence.



In the love of narrow souls I make many short voyages, but in vain. I find no sea room. But in great souls, I sail before the wind without a watch, and never reach the shore.



Nothing makes the earth seem so spacious as to have friends at a distance; they make the latitudes and longitudes.



Every man casts a shadow; not his body only, but his imperfectly mingled spirit. This is his grief.



How insupportable would be the days, if the night with its dews and darkness did not come to restore the drooping world.



Methinks a certain polygamy with its troubles is the fate of almost all men. They are married to two wives, their genius (a celestial muse) and also to some fair daughter of earth. Unless these two were fast friends before marriage, and so are afterwards, there will be but little peace in the home.

The unconsciousness of man is the consciousness of God, the end of the world.



What avails it that another loves you if he does not understand you? Such love is a curse.



Some dreams are divine as well as some waking thoughts.



The divinest poem, or the life of a great man, is the severest satire. . . . The greater the genius the keener the edge of the satire.



As polishing expresses the vein in marble, and grain in wood, so music brings out what of heroic lurks anywhere.



When was it that men agreed to respect the appearance and not the reality?



How sweet it would be to treat men and things, for an hour, for just what they are.



You must be calm before you can utter oracles.

What is the value of any political freedom,
but as a means to moral freedom?



We spend more on almost any article of
bodily aliment or ailment than on our men-
tal aliment.



A friend is one who incessantly pays us
the compliment of expecting from us all the
virtues, and who can appreciate them in us.



Morning is when I am awake and there is
dawn in me.



In human intercourse the tragedy begins,
not when there is misunderstanding about
words, but when silence is not understood.



If there is nothing new on earth, still the
traveller always has a resource in the skies.
They are constantly turning a new page to
view.



An honest book's the noblest work of man.



None will pay us the compliment to expect
obleness from us.

Obey the spur of the moment. These accumulated it is that make the impulse and the impetus of the life of genius.



This is the heroic age itself, though we know it not, for the hero is commonly the simplest and obscurest of men.



There are nine hundred and ninety-nine patrons of virtue to one virtuous man.

Love your life, poor as it is. You may perhaps have some pleasant, thrilling, glorious hours, even in a poorhouse.



With thinking we may be beside ourselves in a sane sense. By a conscious effort of the mind we can stand aloof from actions and their consequences, and all things, good and bad, go by us like a torrent



Civilization does but dress men. . . . Inside the civilized man stands the savage still in the place of honor.



There is something servile in the habit of seeking after a law which we may obey. We may study the laws of matter at and for our own convenience, but a successful life knows no law

Poetry is the mysticism of mankind.



Why level downward to our dullest perception always, and praise that as common-sense? The commonest sense is the sense of men asleep, which they express by snoring.



Love is a severe critic, Hate can pardon more than love.



Who are the estranged? Two friends explaining.



All good abides with him who waiteth *wisely*; we shall sooner overtake the dawn by remaining here than by hurrying over the hills of the west.



There has been no man of pure genius; as there has been none wholly destitute of genius. Some are reputed sick and some are not. It often happens that the sicker man is the nurse to the sounder.



Every part of Nature teaches that the passing away of one life is the making room for another.

Do your work and finish it. If you know how to begin, you will know when to end.



In the long-run men hit only what they aim at. Therefore, though they should fail immediately, they had better aim at something high.



There never is but one opportunity of a kind.



What a man thinks of himself, that it is which determines, or rather indicates, his fate.



If you would know aught, be gay before. Not by constraint or severity shall you have access to true wisdom, but by abandonment and childish mirthfulness.



A broad margin of leisure is as beautiful in a man's life as in a book.



Nothing can shock a brave man but dullness.



We do not avoid evil by fleeing before it, but by raising above or diving below its plan, as the worm escapes drought and frost by boring a few inches deeper.

True friendship can afford true knowledge.
It does not depend on darkness and ignorance.



What recommends commerce to me is its
enterprise and bravery. It does not clasp its
hands and pray to Jupiter.



It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for
the law, so much as for the right.



There is an incessant influx of novelty in-
to the world, and yet we tolerate incredible
b dullness.



If a low use is to be served, one man will
do nearly or quite as well as another; if a
high one, individual excellence is to be re-
garded.



Some dreams are divine as well as some
waking thoughts. . . . Dreams are the touch-
stones of our character. . . . Our truest life is
when we are in dreams awake.



The wisest man preaches no doctrines; he
has no scheme; he sees no rafter, not even a
cobweb, against the heavens. It is clear sky.

Perhaps the facts most astounding and most real are never communicated by man to man.



The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible and indescribable as the tints of morning or evening. It is a little star-dust caught, a segment of the rainbow which I have clutched.



Our life without love is like coke and ashes.



What danger is there if you don't think of any?...A man sits as many risks as he runs.



Treat your friends for what you know them to be. Regard no surfaces. Consider not what they did but what they intended.



We live by exaggeration. What else is it to anticipate more than we enjoy? . . . He who cannot exaggerate is not qualified to utter truth.



From exertion come wisdom and purity; from sloth ignorance and sensuality. In the student sensuality is a sluggish habit of mind.

Goodness is the only investment that never fails.



If we were always getting our living, and regulating our lives according to the last and best mode we had learned, we should never be troubled with ennui.



The works of the great poets have never yet been read by mankind, for only great poets can read them.



Any nobleness begins at once to refine a man's features, any meanness or sensuality to embrate them.



Let us remember not to strive upwards too long, but sometimes drop plump down the other way. From the deepest pit we may see the stars.



We now no longer camp as for a night, but have settled down on earth and forgotten heaven.



Why should not our furniture be as simple as the Arab's or the Indian's?

In wildness is the preservation of the world.



The mass of men live lives of quiet desperation. What is called resignation is confirmed desperation.



I say, beware of all enterprises that require new clothes, and not rather a new wearer of clothes



If you have any enterprise before you, try it in your old clothes.



Unless our philosophy hears the cock crow in every barnyard within our horizon, it is belated.



It is never too late to give up our prejudices. No way of thinking or doing, however ancient, can be trusted without proof.



We go eastward to realize history and study steps of the race; we go westward as into the future, with a spirit of enterprise and ad-
the works of art and literature, retracing the venture.

From the East light; from the West fruit.



The best you can write will be the best you are. The author's character is read from title-page to end. Of this he never corrects the proofs.



The purity men love is like the mists which envelop the earth, and not like the azure ether beyond.



Reserve is the freedom and abandonment of lovers. It is the reserve of what is hostile or indifferent in their natures to give place to what is kindred and harmonious.



The purest science is still biographical.



The conscience really does not, and ought not to monopolise the whole of our lives, any more than the heart or the head. It is as liable to disease as any other part.



If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.

Read the best books first, or you may not have a chance to read them at all.



The finest qualities of our nature, like the bloom on fruits, can be preserved only by the most delicate handling. Yet we do not treat ourselves nor one another thus tenderly.



Live your life, do your work, then take your hat.



The book has never been written which is to be accepted without any allowance.



Humour, however broad and genial, takes a narrower view than enthusiasm.



Our present senses are but the rudiments of what they are destined to become.



Our finest relations are not only kept silent about, but buried under a positive depth of silence never to be revealed.



Each man can interpret another's experience only by his own.

There is no ill which may not be dissipated, like the dark, if you let in a stronger light upon it.



Ignorance and bungling with love are better than wisdom and skill without it.



A book should contain pure discoveries, glimpses of *terra firma*, though by shipwrecked mariners, and not the art of navigation by those who have never been out of sight of land.



The language of friendship is not words, but meanings. It is an intelligence above language.



Man's capacities have never been measured; nor are we to judge of what he can do by any precedents, so little has been tried.



Much of our poetry has the very best manners, but no character.



All change is a miracle to contemplate; but it is a miracle which is taking place every instant.

The at present unutterable things we may find somewhere uttered.



The presence of heroic souls enhances the beauty and ampleness of Nature herself.



A great cheerfulness indeed have all great wits and heroes possessed, almost a profane levity to such as understood them not, but their religion had the broader basis of health and permanence.



Love is an incessant inspiration. By the dews of love the arid desert of life is made as fragrant and blooming as a paradise.



It is remarkable how language, as well as all things else, records only life and progress, never death and decay.



It is not worth the while to let our imperfections disturb us always.



Silence is audible to all men, at all times, and in all places.



Here or nowhere is our Heaven.

In the wildest scenes is the raw material of the most refined life. Here is bast for our shoes and for matting, and rushes for our light, and



no doubt there is papyrus by this river's side; while the goose surely flies overhead.



We think the ancients were foolish who worshipped the sun. I would worship it for ever if I had grace to do so.



You must store up none of the life in your gift; it is as fatal as to husband your breath. We must *live* all our *life*.



One mood always forgets another, and till we have loved we have not imagined the heights of love.



When we hear any musical sound in nature, it is as if it were a bell ringing; we feel that we are not belated, but in season wholly, and enjoy a pensive and leisure hour.



Let the despairing race of men know that there is in nature no sign of decay, but universal uninterrupted vigour. All waste and ruin has a speedy period.

Enthusiasm is a supernatural serenity.

How many wait for health and warm weather to be heroic and noble?

You can always see a face in the fire. The labourer, looking into it at evening, purifies his thoughts of the dross and earthiness which they have accumulated during the day.

We may say that our knowledge is infinite, for we have never discovered its limits; and what we know of infinity is a part of our knowledge still.

The necessity of labour and conversation with many men and things, to the scholar, is rarely well remembered.

Steady labour with the hands, which improves the attention also, is the best method of removing palaver out of one's style both of talking and writing.

All things teach Man to be calm and patient. The language of excitement is only picturesque; but you must be calm to utter oracles.

The tenderness and affection of a woman, her mild prophetic eye, her finer instincts, exert an influence on man from which he is never weaned.



Should not every apartment in which man dwells be lofty enough to create some obscurity overhead, where flickering shadows may play at evening about the rafters?



Books may be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written.



Death is no separation compared with that which takes place when we cease to have confidence in those with whom we have walked in confidence.



When we cease to love one whom we had loved; when we know him no more; when we look for him and cannot find him,—how completely is he departed!



Nature has perfected herself by an eternity of practice.



Men reverence one another, not yet God.

There is no odour so bad as that which arises from goodness tainted. It is human, it is divine, carrion.



There are moments when all anxiety and stinted toil and desires must cease, in the infinite leisure and repose of Nature. Labourers must have their nooning undisturbed.



Old deeds for old people, and new deeds for new.



The laws of Nature are science; but, in an enlightened moment, they are morality and modes of divine life.



It would be an unspeakable advantage, both to the public and private, if men would consider that great truth, that no man is wise or safe, but he that is honest.



Who shall say what prospect life offers to another? Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?



Humility like darkness reveals the heavenly lights.

Follow your genius closely enough, and it will not fail to show you a fresh prospect every hour.

Though music agitates only a few waves of air, yet it affords an ample field for the imagination. It is a solid god and a palpitating heaven.

I have been breaking silence these twenty-three years, and have hardly made a rent in it. Silence has no end; speech is but the beginning of it.

There can be no very black melancholy to him who lives in the midst of Nature, and has his senses still. While I enjoy the friendship of the seasons I trust that nothing can make life a burden to me.

It is a strange world we live in, with this incessant dream of friendship and love; where is any? Genius cannot do without these; it pines and withers.

The life in us is like the water in the river. It may rise this year higher than man has ever known it, and flood the parched uplands. Even this may be the eventful year. . . .

Only that day dawns to which we are awake.
There is more day to dawn.



Nearest to all things is that power which
fashions their being.



Next to us is not the workman whom we
have hired, with whom we love so well to talk,
but the workman whose work we are.



Individuals, like nations, must have suitable
broad and natural boundaries, even a consid-
erable neutral ground, between them.



We like that a sentence should read as if its
author, had he held a plough instead of a
pen, could have drawn a furrow deep and
straight to the end.



The scholar requires hard labour to give an
impetus to his thought; he will learn to grasp
the pen firmly so, and wield it gracefully and
effectually as an axe or sword.



There are few things so evanescent and in-
tangible as music; it is like light and heat in
physics,—still mooted themes.

The death scenes of great men are agreeable to consider only when they make another and harmonious chapter of their lives, and we have accompanied our hero thus far because he lived, so to speak, to the end.



The whole life of a man may safely be referred to a few deep experiences.



I hate museums. There is nothing so weighs upon the spirits. They are catacombs of Nature. They are preserved death. The life that is in a single green weed is of more worth than all this death.



The thrills of joy and thrills of pain are undistinguishable.



-Like speaks to like only; labour to labour, philosophy to philosophy, criticism to criticism, poetry to poetry.



The newest is but the oldest made visible to our senses. When we dig up the soil from a thousand feet below the surface, we call it and the plants which spring from it, new; and when our vision pierces deeper into space, and detects a remoter star, we call that new also. It had shone only to itself, and quite superior to our observation.

A true marriage will differ in no wise from illumination.



Where a man goes, there he is; but the slightest virtue is immovable,—it is real estate not personal; who would keep it must consent to be bought and sold with it.



The poet will maintain serenity in spite of all disappointments. He is expected to preserve an unconcerned and healthy outlook over the world while he lives.



I value and trust those who love and praise my aspiration rather than my performance.



Oh for a man who is a man, and as my neighbour says, has a bone in his back which you cannot pass your hand through!



It is for want of a man that there are so many men. It is individuals that populate the world.



To a small man every greater is an exaggeration.

Friendship is the secret of the universe. You may wander the country, and none shall ever speak of it, yet thought is everywhere busy about it, and the idea of what is possible in this respect affects our behaviour toward all new men and women, and a great many old ones.



A single gentle rain makes the grass many shades greener. So our prospects brighten on the influx of better thoughts.



Life is not for complaint, but for satisfaction.



He is the best sailor who can steer within the fewest points of the wind and extract a motive power out of the greatest obstacles.



It is hard for a man to take money from his friends for any service. This suggests how all men should be related.



There is no wisdom that can take the place of humanity.



Next to having lived a day well, is a clear and calm overlooking of all our days.

Society affects to estimate men by their talents, but really feels and knows them by their character.



There is no more fatal blunderer than he who consumes the greater part of his life getting his living.



The truly efficient labourer will not crowd his day with work, but will saunter to his task surrounded by a wide halo of ease and leisure, and then do but what he loves best. He is anxious only about the fruitful kernels of life.



The universe seems bankrupt as soon as we begin to discuss the character of individuals.



There is more of God and divine help in a man's little finger than in idle prayer and trust.



No man's thoughts are new, but the style of their expression is the never-failing novelty which cheers and refreshes men.



Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows.

Nature must be viewed humanely to be viewed at all. . . . She is most significant to a lover. If I have no friend, what is Nature to me? She ceases to be morally significant.



Warm your spirit by performing independently noble deeds, not by ignobly seeking the sympathy of your fellows who are no better than yourself.



The incessant anxiety and strain of some is a well-nigh incurable disease.



Commonly, men are as much afraid of love as of hate. They have lower engagements. They have near ends to serve. They have not imagination enough to be thus employed about a human being, but must be coopering a barrel, forsooth.



Hold fast by your most indefinite, waking dream.



The gregariousness of men is their most contemptible and discouraging aspect. See how they follow each other like sheep, not knowing why!

How hard it is to be greatly related to mankind! . . . Only he is so who has all mankind for his friend.



Will not war, at length, be thought disreputable, like duelling between individuals?



In criticising your writing, trust your finest instinct.



The tediousness and detail of execution never occur to the genius projecting; it always antedates the completion of its work.



The morning dew breeds no cold.



In the morning we do not believe in expediency; we will start afresh, and have no patching, no temporary fixtures.



In the afternoon man has an interest in the past; his eye is divided, and he sees indifferently well either way.



How can our love increase unless our loveliness increases also?

Our intercourse with the best grows soon shallow and trivial. They no longer inspire us. After enthusiasm comes insipidity.



The most important events make no stir on their first taking place, nor indeed in their effects directly. . . . It is concussion or the rushing together of air to fill a vacuum which makes a noise.



Men are the inveterate foes of all improvement. . . . If you aspire to anything better than politics, exact no co-operation from men. They will not further anything good.



Every man will be a poet if he can, otherwise a philosopher or man of science. This proves the superiority of the poet.



The wise man can afford to doubt in his wisest moment. . . . Faith keeps many doubts in her pay.



The lover sees in the glance of his beloved the same beauty that in the sunset paints the western skies. It is the same *daimon* here lurking under a human eyelid and there under the closing eyelids of the day.

As we grow older, is it not ominous that we have more to write about evening, less about morning? We must associate more with the early hours.



For an impenetrable shield stand inside yourself.



None can be an impartial or wise observer of human life but from the vantage-ground of *what we* should call voluntary poverty.



He who resorts to the easy novel, because he is languid, does not better than if he took a nap.



Some hard and dry book in a dead language, which you have found it impossible to read at home, but for which you have still a lingering regard, is the best to carry with you on a journey.



At a country inn, in the barren society of ostlers and travellers, I could undertake the writers of the silver or the brazen age with confidence.



Any sincere thought is irresistible.

We forget to strive and aspire, to do better even than is expected of us.



It is not in man to determine what his style shall be. He might as well determine what his thoughts shall be.



Who cares what a man's style is, so it is intelligible,—as intelligible as his thought. . . . It is something for use, and not to look at.

Some hours seem not to be occasion for any deed, but for resolves to draw breath in.



We should go forth on the shortest walk, perchance, in the spirit of undying adventure, never to return—prepared to send back our embalmed hearts only as relics to our desolate kingdoms.



A man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to let alone.



No man has the desire and the ability to work on high things, but he has also the ability to build himself a high staging.



We can never afford to postpone a true life to-day to any future and anticipated nobleness.

We think if by tight economy we can manage to arrive at independence, then indeed we will begin to be generous without stay. We sacrifice all nobleness to a little present meanness.



What a man does, compared with what he is, is but a small part.



All biography is the life of Adam,—a much-experienced man,—and time withdraws something partial from the story of every individual, that the historian may supply something general.



The outward is only the outside of that which is within. Men are not concealed under habits, but are revealed by them; they are their true clothes.



For a companion I require one who will make an equal demand on me with my own genius.



True help, for the most part, implies a greatness in him who is to be helped as well as in the helper. It takes a god to be helped even.

Poetry is the only life got, the only work done, the only pure product and free labour of man, performed only when he has put all the world under his feet and conquered the last of his foes.



Let not to get a living be thy trade, but thy sport. Enjoy the land, but own it not.



Our religion is as unpublic and incommunicable as our poetical vein, and to be approached with as much love and tenderness.



Truly, our greatest blessings are very cheap. To have our sunlight without paying for it, without any duty levied . . . without expense of acknowledgment even, but silently accepted out of the east . . . as a matter of course.



The great and solitary heart will love alone, without the knowledge of its object. It cannot have society in its love.



It makes no odds at what well you drink, provided it be a well-head.



You must prevail of your own force, as a plant springs and grows by its own vitality.

Lying on lower levels is but a trivial offence compared with civility and compliments on the level of friendship.



The commonplaces of one age or nation make the poetry of another.



No innocence can quite stand up under suspicion, if it is conscious of being suspected.



Show men unlimited faith as the coin with which you will deal with them, and they will invariably exhibit the best wares they have.



The mind never makes a great effort without a corresponding energy of the body. When great resolves are entertained, its nerves are not relaxed, nor its limbs reclined.



Magnanimity, though it look expensive for a short course, is always economy in the long-run.



Poetry is always impartial and unbiased evidence. When he (a man) only sings a more musical line than usual, all his actions have to be retried by a newer and higher standard than before.

To make up a great action there are no subordinate mean ones.



The era of greatest change is to the subject of it the condition of greatest invariableness.

It is the lowest pulsation which is the most vital.



How vain to try to teach youth or anybody truths. They can only learn them after their own fashion, and when they are ready.



The perfect man has both genius and talent; the one is his head, the other his foot. By one, he is; by the other he lives.



When I hear music I fear no danger. I am invulnerable. I see no foe. I am related to the earliest times, and to the latest.



The longest silence is the most pertinent question most pertinently put. Emphatically silent.



Nothing is so attractive and unceasingly curious as character. . . . It is the violet and the oak. . . . It has no acquaintance and no companion.

To ensure health, a man's relation to Nature must come very near to a personal one. He must be conscious of a friendliness in her. When human friends fail or die, she must stand in the gap to him.



When we have become intolerable to ourselves, shall we be tolerable to Heaven?



The rude pioneer work of the world has been done by the most devoted worshippers of beauty.



A man receives only what he is ready to receive, whether physically or intellectually, or morally.



Good poetry seems so simple and natural a thing that when we meet it, we wonder that all men are not poets. Poetry is nothing but healthy speech.



The only danger in friendship is that it will end. It is a delicate plant, though a native.

Considering how few poetical friendships there are, it is remarkable that so many are married. It would seem as if men yielded too easy an obedience to nature without consulting their genius.

What a fool he must be who thinks that his
El Dorado is anywhere but where he lives.



One thing is certain—that we had best be
doing something in good earnest henceforth
for ever; that's an indispensable philosophy.



In the steadiness and equanimity of music
lies its divinity. It is the only assured tone.



Do not despair of your life You have force
enough to overcome your obstacles.



What wisdom, what warning, can prevail
against gladness? There is no law so strong
which a little gladness may not transgress.



If I were consciously to join any party it
would be that which is the most free to enter-
tain thought.



It is in vain to write on chosen themes.
We must wait till they have kindled a flame
in our minds.



Friends ase as often brought nearer to-
gether as separated by death

A man's social and spiritual discipline must answer to his corporeal. . . . He must daily bathe in truth cold as spring water, not warmed by the sympathy of friends.



The poet's relation to his theme is the relation of lovers. It is more to be courted. Obey, report.



No part of man's nature is formed with a useless or sinister intent. In no respect can he be wholly bad, but the worst passions have their root in the best.



The most I can do for my friend is simply to be his friend. I have no wealth to bestow on him. If he knows that I am happy in loving him he will want no other reward. Is not friendship divine in this?



It is a beautiful illustration of the law of obedience, the flow of the river; the path for a sick man, a highway down which an acorn cup may float secure with its freight.



The writer must, to some extent, inspire himself. . . . Each clear thought that he attains to, draws in its train many kindred thoughts and impressions.

Provided you *think* well, the heavens falling, or the earth gaping, will be music for you to march by.



Are we not always in youth so long as we face heaven? We may always live in the morning of our days.



It is never so cold but it melts somewhere. . . . It is always melting and freezing at the same time where icicles are formed.



Would you see your mind, look into the sky. Would you know your own moods, be weather-wise. He whom the weather disappoints, disappoints himself.



Men and women of equal culture, thrown together, are sure to be of a certain value to one another, more than men to men.



The fates never exaggerate. Men pass for what they are.



It is hard to subject ourselves to an influence. It must steal upon us when we expect it not, and its work be all done ere we are aware of it.

It is foolish for a man to accumulate material wealth chiefly, houses and land. Our stock in life, our real estate, is the amount of thought which we have had, which we have thought out.



We go about mending the times when we should be building the eternity.



We are attracted to a particular person, but no one has discovered the laws of this attraction. . . . It may be enough that we have met *some time*, and now can never forget it.



Write while the heat is in you. . . . The writer who postpones the recording of his thoughts, uses an iron which has cooled to burn a hole with. He cannot inflame the minds of his audience.



Some men, methinks, have found only their hands and feet. At least, I have seen some who appear never to have found their heads but used them only instinctively.



A strong, musical voice imposes a new order and harmony upon nature. From it as a centre, a law is promulgated to the universe.

The brute growls to secure obedience, he threatens; the man speaks as if obedience were already secured.



The sexes are naturally most strongly attracted to one another by constitutional differences, and are most commonly and surely the complements of each other.



In winter every man is, to a slight extent, dormant, just as some animals are but partially awake though not commonly classed with those that hibernate.



A great person, though unconsciously, will constantly give you great opportunities to serve him, but a mean one will quite preclude all active benevolence.



There are nowadays professors of philosophy, but not philosophers. Yet it is admirable to profess because it was once admirable to live.



The life which men praise and regard as successful is but one kind. Why should we exaggerate any one kind at the expense of the other?

Old shoes will serve a hero longer than they have served his valet—if a hero ever has a valet—bare feet are older than shoes, and he can make them do



Every generation laughs at the old fashions, but follows religiously the new.



Compassion is a very untenable ground. It must be expeditious. Its pleadings will not bear to be stereotyped.



Thank Heaven, here is not all the world.



I would rather ride on earth in an oxcart with a free circulation, than go to heaven in the fancy car of an excursion train and breathe a *malaria* all the way.



There is some of the same fitness in a man's building his own house that there is in a bird's building its own nest. . . . Shall we forever resign the pleasure of construction to the carpenter?



Man is an animal who more than any other can adapt himself to all climates and circumstances.

In view of the future or possible, we should live quite laxly and undefined in front, our outlines dim and misty on that side; as our shadows reveal an insensible perspiration toward the sun.



The light which puts out our eyes is darkness to us.



Not till we are lost—in other words, not till we have lost the world—do we begin to find ourselves, and realize where we are, and the infinite extent of our relations.



No method nor discipline can supersede the necessity of being forever on the alert.



A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is earth's eye, looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature.



You must have a genius for charity as well as for anything else



There are various, nay, incredible faiths; why should we be alarmed at any of them? What man believes, God believes.

What if all ponds were shallow? Would it not react on the minds of men? . . . While men believe in the infinite, some ponds will be thought to be bottomless.



Morning brings back the heroic ages.



Gardening is civil and social, but it wants the vigor and freedom of the forest and the outlaw. There may be an excess of cultivation as well as of anything else, until civilization becomes pathetic.



All nations love the same jests and tales . . . and the same translated suffice for all. All men are children, and of one family.



It is necessary not to be Christian to appreciate the beauty and significance of the life of Christ.



There are various tough problems yet to solve, and we must make shift to live, betwixt spirit and matter, such a human life as we can.



This is half our life. Who would undertake the enterprise if it were all?

All men are partially buried in the grave of custom, and of some we see only the crown of the head above ground. Better are the physically dead, for they more lively rot. Even virtue is no longer such if it be stagnant.



The rarest quality in an epitaph is truth. . . . Friends and contemporaries should supply only the name and date, and leave it to posterity to write the epitaph.



Fame itself is but an epitaph; as late, as false, as true.



I have seen some who did not know when to turn aside their eyes in meeting yours. . . . Serpents alone conquer by the steadiness of their gaze. My friend looks me in the face and sees me, that is all.



It is not easy to write in a journal what interests us at any time, because to write it is not what interests us.

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